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Atlas, a Magazine for Thinkers

○ EVERY ONCE-IN A WHILE I am fascinated all over again by the magazine Atlas, which each month distills "the best from the world press" and offers it to subscribers in this country. The February issue contains material from publications in Moscow, London, Hamburg, Milan, Dakar, Peking, Prague, Rome, Buenos Aires, Paris, Budapest, Frankfurt and Montevideo, as well as cartoons from other places.

Atlas provides not only a view-from-inside of a number of foreign countries and their problems, but, when obtainable, foreign views of the United States and its problems. From the Journal Du Dimanche, for example, in Paris, comes an excerpt from a piece in which Playwright Antoine Bourseiller offers the opinion that the American love for dogs—he writes that he never has seen as many dogs as he did in New York City—is, he believes, "due to the fact that most Americans are frustrated sentimentally. They suffer from a lack of affection." Bourseiller also declares that the American theater provides a freer forum for artists because of "the right to be in bad taste"—something the French are fearful of trying.

○ THERE IS A SADLY informative story on how the half-black Italians, reminders of the influx of American troops during World War II, are faring in today's Italy, a satirical account of memoirs—such as Khrushchev's—which the Kremlin says were written by the CIA and the CIA says were done by the KGB, and a survey of Dutch television which, you may be startled to know, sometimes features a naked girl reading the stock market quotations.

But the most melancholy article, I suppose, and one that serves as a reminder that similar things have happened in this country in the not-too-distant past, is about "book burning"—and banning—in Argentina.

A young reporter for Semana, a Buenos Aires weekly, wrote the piece, which verifies rumors that the government does indeed seize—and burn—books with which there is official disagreement. The reporter, Juan Carlos Martini, writes:

"Publishers and distributors confirmed that customs and postal officials are now opening all packages containing books for export as well as those being imported. They added that confiscated books have meant the loss of millions of pesos to them. It appeared that after the initial inspection by said officials, the books are thoroly examined by SIDE, the Argentine secret police."

Martini discovered that some of the seized works are indeed burned, "like refuse and dead dogs," in the municipal furnaces to which they are brought in armored police cars.

Among titles banned in Argentina are "Portnoy's Complaint," by Philip Roth; "Myra Breckinridge," by Gore Vidal; "Ecstasy and Me," by Hedy Lamarr; "Summerhill," by A. S. Neill; "Ironies of History," by Isaac Deutscher; "Eros and Civilization," by Herbert Marcuse; "Who Rules America?" by G. William Domhoff; "The Deputy," by Rolf Hochhuth; "Three Faces of Fascism," by Ernst Nolte and "Neocolonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism," by Kwame Nkrumah—this one at the same time it was required reading for sociology students at the University of Buenos Aires.

A magazine for the thoughtful reader.

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